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The Chelsea Waterfront

A
Conceptual
Study for
Development
of an
Underutilized
Area on the
West Side
of
Manhattan

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THE CHELSEA WATERFRONT

A Conceptual Study for the Development
of an Underutilized Area on the West
Side of Manhattan

Prepared for the
WATERFRONT SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARD NO. 4
by
RAYMOND, PARISH & PINE, INC.
Planning and Development Consultants
July, 1973

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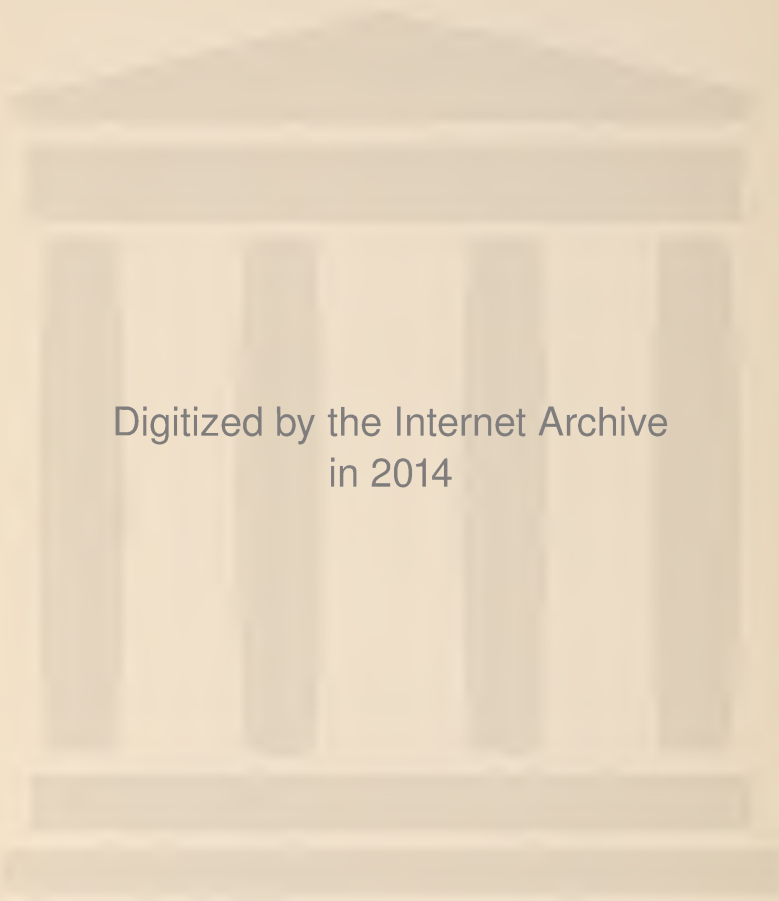
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Preface and Summary

While the subject of this planning analysis is a specific problem on Manhattan's West Side, the factors at work and the long term implications involved are citywide in both their scope and significance.

New York City is losing jobs. The problem was well put in the May 18, 1973 issue of City Club "Comments", from which we quote:

"The single most important fact about New York City is that its economy is deteriorating. There are fewer good factory jobs and factory wages are relatively lower than they were 25 years ago. ... The cost of municipal government increases; the economic base, from which taxes must be raised, recedes ...

What can be done to improve the economy of the city?... How can we attract new capital investment which would provide manufacturing employment?... How can the City further relate to growing international trade and tourism?What are logical new industries for the city?... The City needs at least 250,000 more good private sector jobs immediately. ..."

This planning study, which has been carried out for the Waterfront Subcommittee of Planning Board No. 4, addresses itself to precisely these questions. The Subcommittee asked Raymond, Parish & Pine, Inc. to investigate the possibility of waterfront-related commercial/industrial use of the Chelsea Piers (roughly from 14th Street to 23rd Street) along with the inland area east to Tenth Avenue.

As is well known, the piers in this area are almost completely abandoned. Many longshoremen's jobs have been lost. Even more serious, the longshoremen's jobs represented a vital first link in a chain of jobs involving truckmen, warehousemen, industrial and/or retail workers elsewhere in Manhattan and New York. Each port job, in fact, generates four to five other jobs in the City. Thus, the loss of the port jobs has had a serious negative multiplier effect on the City's economy as a whole. As a direct result of the piers' abandonment within the study area, the adjacent inland former back-up areas are now utilized in large part for relatively low density, non-waterfront related uses.

The abandonment of the piers followed a breathtakingly rapid technological change in shipping and cargo handling from break bulk cargo (for which the piers were designed) to containerization. And yet, the piers' abandonment coincided with a period of considerable overall growth in the Port of New York's annual cargo handling volume.

Conventional wisdom has insisted that Chelsea (and, indeed, the rest of Manhattan) is not suited for containerization, since there is a lack of upland space to accommodate the new containerization technology, a lack of rail access, lack of truck feeder routes and access, and a declining industrial base in Manhattan to support the shipping activity.

Our studies have shown that none of these factors can be taken to be a true obstacle to use of the Chelsea piers for shipping, intermodal freight terminals, and/or an integrated shipping/processing transportation center:



(a) New York does have a declining industrial base. But it still constitutes one of the world's major industrial and commercial concentrations. Goods must be received and sent. At present, many of these goods must be trucked in over the jammed Hudson River crossings instead of arriving directly on Manhattan's West Side. Rather than ascribing the decline in shipping to a declining industrial base, it might well be more appropriate to ascribe at least part of the blame for the declining industrial base to the City's loss of leadership in shipping and goods handling to the Port Authority's New Jersey containerports. Why are these containerports not in Manhattan?

*T 9.8 goods brought
to Man. Har*

see fig 7.6 page

(b) It has been fashionable to cite technological reasons for the loss of shipping. First, and foremost, is the claim that there is not enough land for the new container technology. This is simply not true. The City has a vast reservoir of untapped land from Battery Park north to midtown, from the U.S. bulkhead to U.S. pierhead lines. There are literally hundreds of acres available here with absolutely no relocation required.

- (c) It is argued that there is no rail access. However, this can be quite easily remedied, if desired, with connections to the Penn Central Yards at 30th Street and the Gansevoort meat market spur. These rail links can be extended to Kennedy Airport, all of New England, and the midwest.
- (d) It is argued that there is not good truck access. This has been true in the past, but the current plans to rebuild the West Side Highway as a combined truck-automobile route will mean that there is excellent truck access to the piers.

It is true, of course, that use of the West Side waterfront for shipping, intermodel terminals, or integrated shipping and processing/distribution facilities will be expensive. It will require subsidy. But the region's taxpayers currently subsidize far-flung containerports by building suburban highways and constructing expensive trans-Hudson crossings. In this way, we seem to deliberately drive jobs out of Manhattan and New York, and into suburban areas.

In fact, the main obstacle to use of the Chelsea area for commercial and shipping activities has been New York City's own policy — a policy which calls for containerport freight handling developments in outlying areas or in New Jersey (locations which also require, and have received, subsidies) with the use of Manhattan's waterfront reserved for residential, park, or other purposes.



It is true that the land-hungry single level containerport probably has little or no place in Manhattan. Clearly what is necessary is a detailed exploration of the possibility of new technology, such as vertical containerports, LASH ships, or the use of multi-level integrated shipping and manufacturing developments which would make the best use of Manhattan's precious land. Such developments can make real inroads on the problem of the City's declining economic base. They will require subsidy. But they could provide a strong catalytic effect, and ultimately repay the City's investment many times over through creation of new jobs in commerce and industry and a strengthening of the City's economic base.

The thrust of this planning study is that the technological means can be found, if desired, to implement such a City policy.

"New York City was built on waterborne commerce, and we intend to remain the preeminent port of call in the nation."

Mayor Lindsay, August 14, 1972.

A. Background

1. This conceptual planning study has been undertaken for the Waterfront Subcommittee of Community Planning Board No. 4.
2. The area under study extends westward from Tenth Avenue to the U.S. pierhead line and from approximately 14th Street to 23rd Street. It includes the Chelsea piers plus upland back-up space between the bulkhead line and Tenth Avenue which was originally devoted largely to pier-related trucking and storage activities.

In order to provide a comprehensive viewpoint for the planning study, we have also considered the situation in adjacent blocks and piers as far south as 14th Street and Pier 54, although actually Pier 54 falls within the jurisdiction of Community Planning Board No. 2.



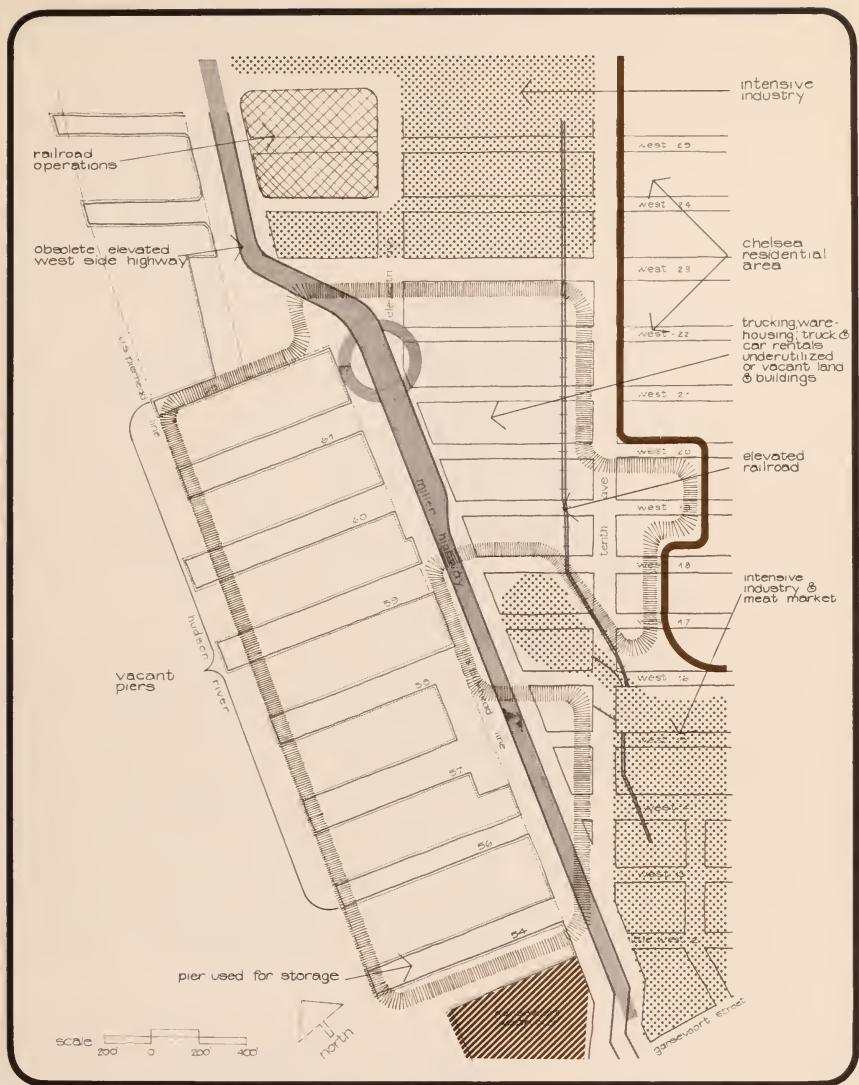
B. Shipping in the Port of New York

170 Acres

3. The entire area comprises slightly more than one hundred acres, of which 57 acres are water and piers, almost 18 acres are in 11th Avenue and under the West Side Highway, and 26 acres are in the blocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.
4. In 1963, over 10 percent of the entire Port of New York-New Jersey's employment was located on the Chelsea piers. Today, less than ten years later, the Chelsea piers are substantially vacant and shipping-related employment has all but vanished.
5. During the 1963-1970 period, however, the Port's ocean borne foreign trade increased by almost 30 percent.
6. These statistics describe, in global terms, a dramatic two-fold change that has occurred in shipping technology in general, and the Port of New York in particular. As is well known, there has been a substantial shift away from the old "break bulk" method of general cargo handling towards an increased use of containerization. This has resulted in decreased man hours per ton of goods handled. It has also meant that old finger-type piers, originally intended for break bulk cargo handling, generally no longer have sufficient storage and handling space to service the far faster turnaround times of container ships. Most container handling technology to date has relied on large "back-up" areas for storage and preparation of containers. Typically, such back-up space has been provided as large, single-level paved areas where land is available cheaply and where easy access is available to the regional highway network.
7. In the Port of New York, considerations of this sort have led the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey to establish major container terminals in New York Bay at Port Newark and Port Elizabeth, near the Jersey Turnpike. Other container ports have been planned or established in Brooklyn and Staten Island.

C. The Chelsea Piers Today

8. Competition from such modern port facilities has resulted in the abandonment of the older Hudson River piers. In Chelsea, in May of 1969, the United States Lines vacated Piers 59, 60, 61 and 62 which had just been completely renovated and modernized as break bulk piers (at a cost in excess of \$25,000,000). Other piers are vacant or used for basically non-maritime related functions. Thus, present use of the piers is as follows:



study area setting

Pier 54 (built 1906, rebuilt 1931): Police Department storehouse;

Pier 56 (built 1906): Vacant;

Pier 57 (built 1954): Vacant;

Pier 58 (built 1905): Vacant;

Pier 59 (built 1906, reconstructed 1968): Vacant;

Pier 60 (built 1904, reconstructed 1967): Vacant;

Pier 61 (built 1904, reconstructed 1966): Vacant;

Pier 62 (built 1904, reconstructed 1963): Vacant;

Pier 63 (built 1958): Storage and freight forwarding.

9. Piers 59, 60, 61 and 62 contain 700,000 square feet of excellent, vacant warehouse and office space.

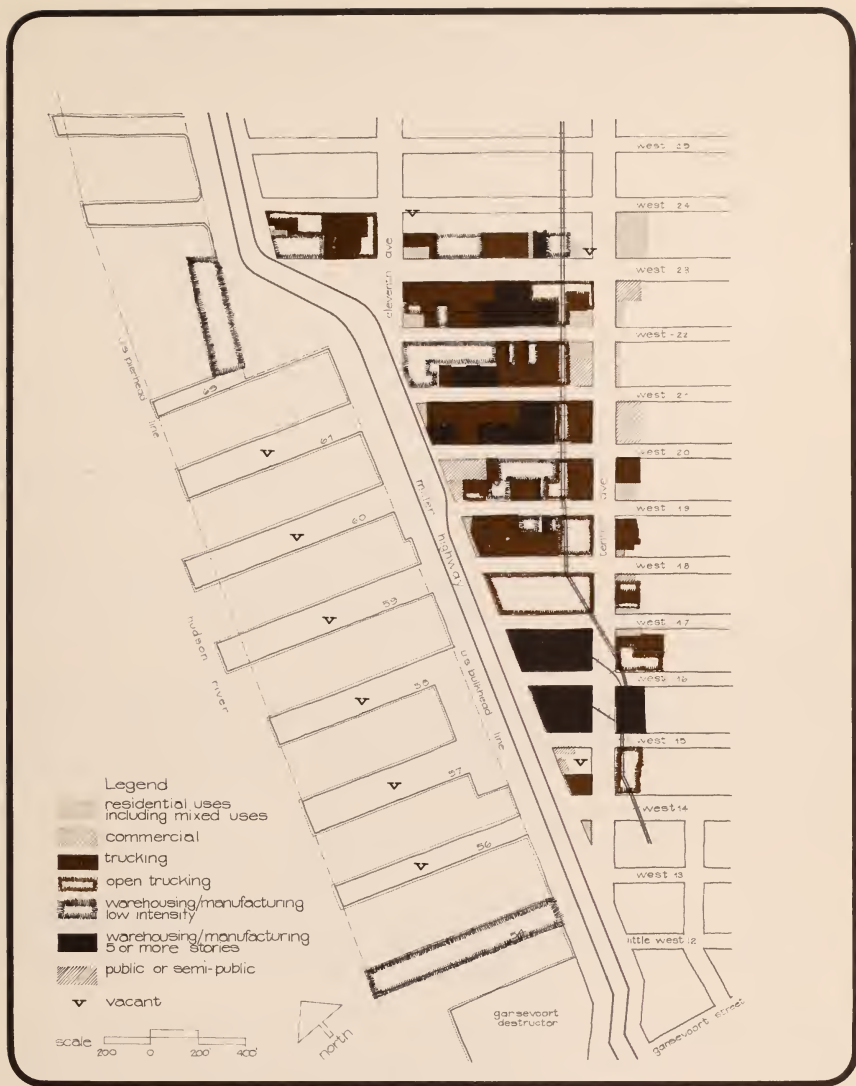
D. Land Use and Jobs in the Study Area

10. The result of this abandonment has been the creation of a "hole" in the basically high employment pattern of lower Manhattan. Previous surveys conducted for the New York City Planning Commission in Chelsea have shown that industrial sections north of the study area have a job density of 270 employees per acre; the Manhattan Industrial Center, south of the study area, has more than 350 jobs per acre.

The study area itself, which was originally a trucking and warehouse back-up space for the piers, has a far lower job density of about 60/acre.

The net loss to the City caused by the cessation of shipping activities is, of course, far wider than the loss of jobs for longshoremen alone. Many previous studies have shown that there are four to five other jobs dependent upon each longshoreman job. Thus, the loss of 5,000 longshore jobs meant additional losses in supplies, truckers, freight forwarders, manufacturing, retailing and so on. Further, the loss of basic goods handling services has undoubtedly affected other industrial location decisions, encouraging the movement of industry and commerce outside of New York. In addition, such losses lead to an erosion of the city's tax base with a consequent increased economic squeeze on the remaining residents and businesses.

11. Many of the area's warehouses are now underutilized or devoted to non-maritime uses. Other extensive sites have been developed for truck storage and service activities which have little or no reason to be located as they are near prime waterfront areas.



existing land use

12. Tenth Avenue, which forms the study area's eastern edge, is generally developed with heavy commercial uses, with some older mixed residential tenements. East of Tenth Avenue is the solidly residential development of Chelsea.
13. To the south, across 14th Street, is the Gansevoort Meat Market plus associated refrigeration warehousing. The meat market has recently spent considerable sums of money to modernize the older structures in this area in order to comply with new Federal health regulations. Although the City has urged removal of the market to Hunts Point, there has been a great deal of resistance to such a move. In fact, there appears to be a need for additional space in the area to accommodate future expansion of meat market activities.
14. The meat market is served by a spur of the Penn Central Railroad, which comes south from the 30th Street yards on an overhead alignment west of Tenth Avenue.
15. The City's Gansevoort destructor, a garbage incinerator and marine transfer facility, is located on the water, at Pier 53, just south of the Chelsea piers.
16. North of the site there exist additional low density opportunities for redevelopment, particularly in the areas of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad yards and obsolete car float operations.

E. The West Side Highway

17. The area is served by the West Side Highway, with on and off-ramps at 23rd Street. The highway, which is restricted to automobiles and does not allow trucks, is woefully inadequate and obsolete. Planning studies are now underway for the reconstruction of this highway as a mixed use facility.
18. The planned reconstruction of the West Side Highway as a route permitting trucking should serve as the stimulus to the rebirth of this prime west side location. It is necessary now, before highway plans are completed, to indicate on a conceptual level the area's potential development pattern, so that the highway can be made to serve the site in the most productive and useful possible fashion.

F. Alternative Highway Alignments

19. There appear to be several possible alternative types of locations for the highway. While the present study is not an attempt to suggest detailed highway plans, it is necessary to consider what the broad highway options are and how, if at all, the various options affect the site's development possibilities.

20. In analyzing alternative highway and land use options, it is helpful to think of the study area in terms of three north-south bands. The westernmost band consists of the piers and the water; the middle band is Eleventh Avenue and the present West Side Highway; the eastern band is the mixed trucking — warehousing — industrial area between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.
21. Both for reasons of geometry and because of the unacceptably high displacement which would result, it seems most unlikely that the highway would be routed in its entirety east of Eleventh Avenue.
22. It would probably be possible to build the new highway on a staged basis in the central band of the study area — in Eleventh Avenue.

If such a location were chosen there would remain the question of what type of roadway is possible or acceptable. We doubt that an at-grade facility would be desired, since such a road would tend to cut off the waterfront development area from the local street system.

An underground or sunken alignment would be possible, but costly. This would permit linkages of waterfront and inland areas. An elevated highway would also permit such grade-level linkages.

23. It is also possible to build the highway over the water, in the westernmost band. Here the alignment could take a number of possible locations, ranging from the bulkhead to pierhead line. In any event, it is presumed that the highway would be at the lowest possible level, with other development uses stacked above the road, tying back into adjacent upland areas.

G. General Highway Planning Considerations

24. In general, it would appear that the most favorable highway alternative is one which does not separate the water and land areas, and which does not usurp valuable acreage purely for highway purposes, but allows for stacking and multiple uses. Since several possible highway configurations can offer such advantages, it seems clear that conceptual planning for the Chelsea pier area need not be tied to any one highway alignment proposal. Conversely, however, the new highway alignment must be chosen to permit this flexibility in land use options.

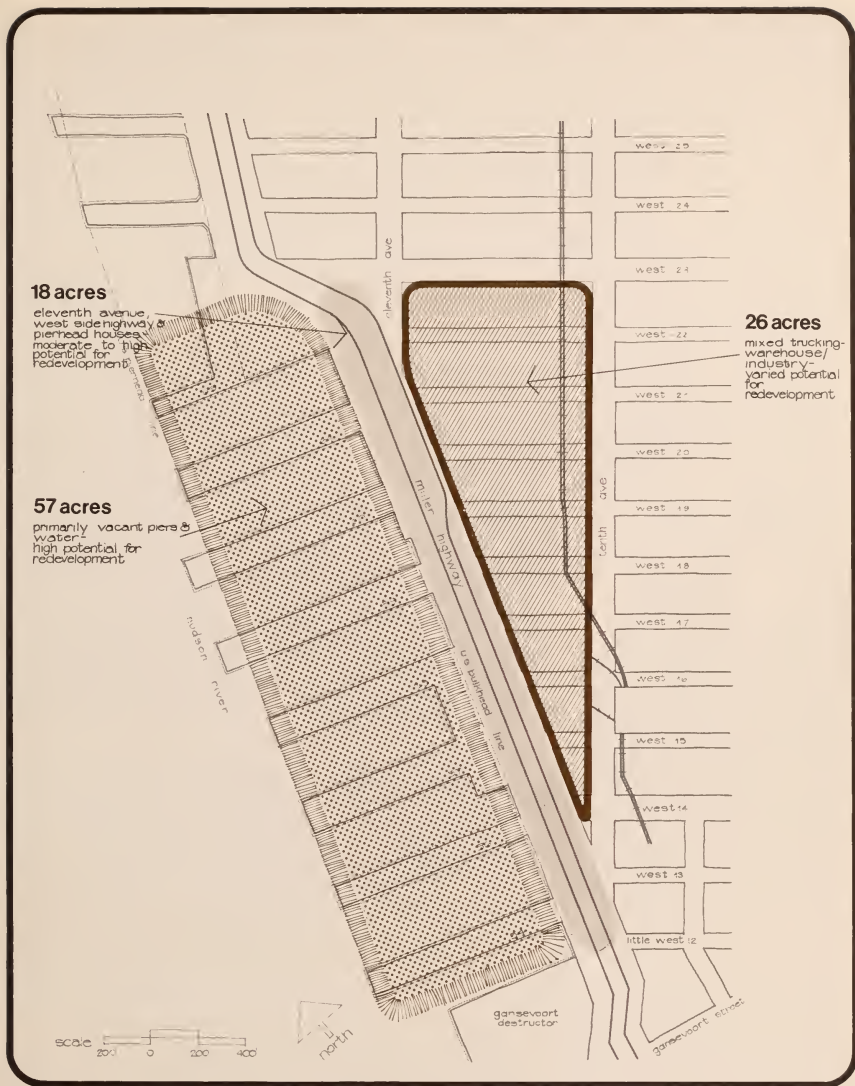
25. One aspect of the highway planning is crucial, however. That is the location of off and on-ramps for the new facility. Obviously, these must be located so as to properly serve the Chelsea pier area. They must also be designed so as to usurp as little of the remaining land area as possible.

H. The Pier Area's Advantages

The advantages and attractive features offered by the study area can now be summarized as follows:

- (a) With the development of the new West Side Highway, access by truck and car to the regional transportation network.
- (b) Rail access via the Penn Central line serving the meat market near Tenth Avenue. This access can be extended, if desired, to serve local airports, all of New England and the mid-west.
- (c) Water access for shipping, ranging from barges to ocean-going vessels.
- (d) Proximity to New York's extensive retail and manufacturing operations which require tremendous amounts of imported materials and goods.
- (e) Similarly, proximity to New York's manufacturers who export goods in foreign trade.
- (f) Proximity to New York's substantial labor market.
- (g) Present availability of over 700,000 vacant square feet of excellent warehouse/distribution/industrial space in the renovated piers.





development potential

- (h) Availability, on a longer term basis, of more than 55 acres of potential land which could be created between the bulkhead and pierhead lines without displacement of a single family or business.
- (i) Availability of extensive warehousing facilities in the 26 acre multi-block area immediately east of Eleventh Avenue, with numerous sites suitable for trucking and more extensive development of distribution facilities.
- (j) The existence of the meat market to the south which will probably require expansion space and which could almost certainly profit from the direct availability of shipped-in meat in containers or otherwise.





I. An Intermodal Freight Transfer and Distribution Center

26. All of these considerations seem to suggest that the most logical development of the study area is as an intensive inter-modal freight transfer and distribution center, coupled with warehousing and in-site manufacturing and processing.
27. Such an inter-modal freight handling and production center could offer an interchange point between shipping, truck, rail and even air cargo. Such a center, built to Manhattan standards, would, of course, have a multi-level physical form as opposed to the spread out, low, wasteful solutions now practiced in New Jersey and the outer boroughs.
28. The objections which often are raised to this type of development in Manhattan center on (1) the amount of traffic which is created; (2) the often repeated but seldom explored assertion that vast amounts of back-up space are required, and that such land is not available in Manhattan; and (3) the inevitably higher cost of developing such facilities in Manhattan as opposed to New Jersey or Staten Island.

J. Traffic Considerations

29. As regards the question of traffic:
 - (a) New York City, and Manhattan in particular, is one of the largest markets in the world for imported goods. It is often forgotten that the number of manufacturing jobs in Manhattan still exceeds 500,000, which is more than that of many individual states. In addition, New York requires the importation of tremendous quantities of food and manufactured items for distribution in the City's retail and wholesale outlets.
 - (b) Present thinking seems content to accept the idea that the freight handling activities associated with this large movement of goods should be assigned to outlying areas of the region where cheap land can be assembled in large spread out tracts. Even with such a solution, however, it is still necessary to truck vast quantities of materials from these outlying areas into the City and Manhattan. One way or another, the necessary service of New York's manufacturing and distribution outlets requires bringing trucks onto the City streets.
 - (c) It would obviously reduce the number of trips made on the region's roads if those goods bound for Manhattan, *and which end up in Manhattan anyway*, were brought directly into Manhattan. Large shipments could then be broken down at a distribution center within the City

and sent out onto the City's streets in smaller trucks capable of servicing New York's thousands of individual customers and outlets.

- (d) Aside from the efficiencies offered in distribution, such a system would create jobs in Manhattan as opposed to jobs in New Jersey or other remote areas.
- (e) With proper planning, even the reduced amount of trucking associated with such a distribution system could be further compressed. By establishing an inter-modal transfer point, goods arriving by ship could be placed directly on railroad cars and thus delivered to customers throughout New England or the midwest without adding at all to the City's traffic load. Further, if processing and manufacturing jobs were added in a multi-level configuration on the same site, an entire segment of the goods movement system could be converted from a "horizontal" system on the streets to a "vertical" system within a single structure.
- (f) From a regional point of view, it has become clear that the increased congestion which is being experienced at the New Jersey containerport areas will require tremendous expenditures for new highway connections and, very probably, a new Hudson River crossing in order to get the goods where they are going in the first place — that is, to New York and New England. Any consideration of the costs of providing sufficient space in Manhattan must be balanced against the tremendous regional subsidies which are now, and will be, required to prop up the basically inefficient goods distribution system now accepted as standard.
- (g) In effect, we have settled for a path of least resistance which calls for the development of goods handling facilities separated from their markets, where land is cheap, and the construction of the expensive necessary infrastructure to connect these supportive locations, at great public expense, in the second stages when there is no longer much option in the matter.
- (h) An even less desirable alternative is to avoid providing the required connective infrastructure and, in effect, forcing manufacturing and retail jobs out of Manhattan to locations adjacent to the goods distribution centers. This, of course, is precisely what has been happening in

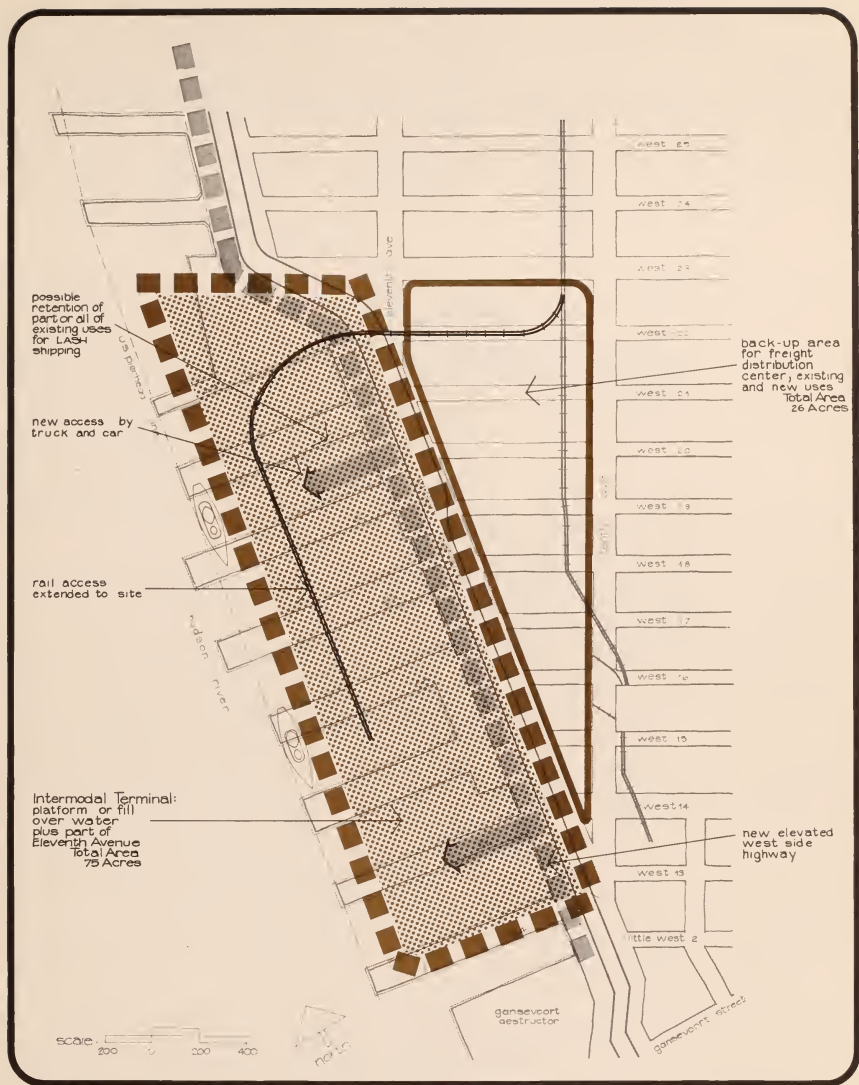
Concept 1a shows the development of an intermodal freight transfer and distribution center utilizing "new land" created by construction of a platform (or filling) in the area of the old Chelsea piers.

The West Side Highway is shown schematically realigned on an elevated structure, generally along the present alignment of Eleventh Avenue. The new highway would provide direct trucking access into the freight distribution center. By elevating the road it should be possible to use the land under and east of the highway as an integral part of the freight distribution center.

Rail access would be provided by a westerly extension of the Penn Central line which now serves the Gansevoort Meat Market.

The area now devoted to mixed trucking and warehousing uses between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues would serve as a back-up area for the freight distribution center, offering storage facilities and ancillary services for shippers.

In its actual development, such a concept might well retain all or parts of Piers 59-62, with filling or decking operations confined to the area from Piers 54 to 58.



1a

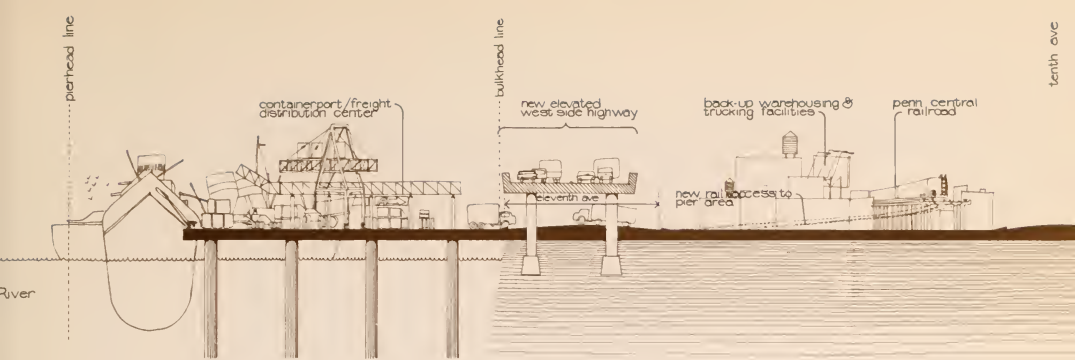
west side highway
elevated over
eleventh avenue-
single level
intermodal terminal

New York. To some extent, such a movement of manufacturing and commercial activity out of New York is perhaps inevitable, given changing production technology and shifting population patterns. Nonetheless, there remains a tremendous Manhattan market, and its share of the regional pie might be stabilized or even increased if a more rational pattern of goods distribution and processing were established.

K. Land Area Requirements

30. As to the large required land area for a containerport and goods distribution:

- (a) As we have indicated earlier, the shift to increased use of containerization has led to greatly increased land requirements. This is due to the much more rapid turnaround time of these ships, which necessitates the provision of storage areas for entire cargoes at any one time, as opposed to the much lower land requirements when ships were loaded and unloaded over a longer time period.
- (b) This land area problem can be dealt with in a number of ways:
 - (i) First, by simply finding ways to provide the required 25 to 30 acres per berth as a single level piece of land near the water, as was done in Port Elizabeth, for example. This land area provides for loading and unloading cranes, storage of containers, and space for stripping and stuffing containers in a consolidation shed.
 - (ii) In the case of the area under study, it is possible to provide such areas. The land could be created by either filling or creating a platform over the water. The total area available for this platform from the bulkhead to pierhead line is approximately 57 acres, or sufficient for two berths if a single level conventional containerport is established. There is also available an additional 18 acres from the bulkhead line to the east side of Eleventh Avenue. The total 75 acre area, with 3,200-4,000 feet of shoreline could then be developed as a three-berth containerport. "Land" prices, of course, would be substantially higher than in outlying areas.



1a east/west section

west side highway constructed near
bulkhead line
(no scale)

- (iii) The necessary stripping and stuffing operations need not be directly on the water, but could be inland provided there was direct and uninterrupted access to the site. Thus, perhaps five to ten acres of the containerport could be moved inland off the water frontage. In the case of the area under study, these functions could be established within underutilized portions of the blocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues.
- (iv) Reduce the amount of space required for storage of containers through use of vertical storage in structures similar to those utilized for mechanical parking garages.

No such vertical containerport has yet been built. However, the complete technology for such a system exists today. Movement of containers would be programmed and controlled by computer, a system which would have the advantage of allowing much more precise control of trucking movements into and out of the containerport.

Storage requirements are reduced to 10 percent to 20 percent of the land needed for alternative

Concept 1b involves a land use pattern similar to that in Concept 1a. In this plan, however, the West Side Highway is shown on an alignment within one hundred feet of the pierhead line.

The new freight handling facilities are partially built in the form of a second deck over the highway. From a conceptual point of view either alignment of the highway can probably be made to work with the new freight terminal uses. In both cases, however, it is important that the on and off access ramps be coordinated with the new development, and that the highway allow uninterrupted movement from east to west across the site, as well as uninterrupted access to the water.

systems. Total space requirements, including circulation, stuffing, etc., are cut to one-third to two-thirds of alternative systems. Thus, a two-berth containerport requiring approximately 50 to 60 acres in conventional, spread out storage systems could be built in 30 acres with vertical storage. At least partially, if not completely offsetting these advantages are the higher cost of the automated structure and expensive in-city land when compared to the price of land in outlying parts of the region.

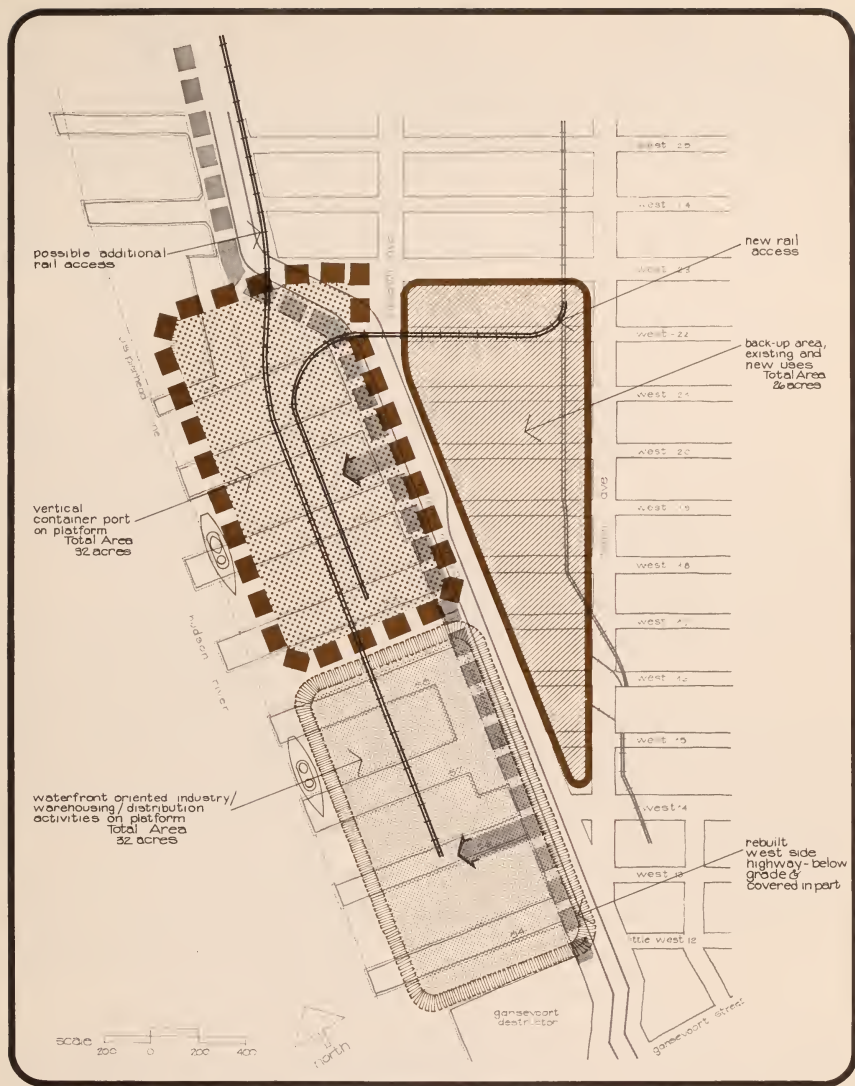
- (v) Utilize some of the newest container technology, including:
 - a. LASH ships (Lighter Aboard Ship). Under this system, which has been developed by General Dynamics, cargo is loaded onto large barges at dockside which are then towed to the seagoing vessel which may be moored elsewhere in the harbor. The loaded barges are lifted into place on the ship by elevators.

One of the many advantages of this system is that ocean-bound cargo can be assembled from a number of different locations in order to make a single shipload. Thus, materials or containers loaded on barges at the Chelsea piers, for example, need not constitute a full load. The amount of back-up and storage space can therefore be reduced to that which can be economically provided on the site, with the overall results of the system more economical in terms of speed and flexibility compared to that provided by current container ships.

- b. A second technological improvement involves roll on — roll off cargo (this is also possible with LASH ships). Here, all types of equipment and vehicles that move on wheels rolls on and off the ship via special steel ramps. Loading and unloading take place simultaneously. Turnabout time for such a "trailership" is 50 percent faster than conventional containerships.

Concept 2 shows the effect of utilizing a vertical rather than horizontal solution. The containerport is developed utilizing vertical storage facilities, which permits the operation to be developed within a 32-acre area.

The remainder of the waterfront can then be developed with multi-level industrial/warehousing and distribution activities, with direct access to rail, truck, and water for inbound and outbound goods.



2

west side highway on depressed alignment, vertical intermodal terminal plus processing.

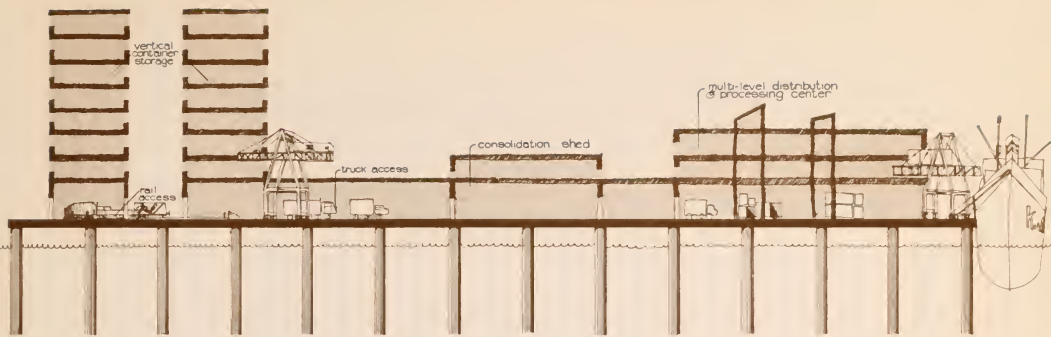
fill and bulkheading requirements) with the cost of a single level platform over the water of perhaps \$1,000,000 an acre, we see that the differential is 7 to 25 times in order of magnitude cost terms. Land costs can be reduced somewhat, however, if we reduce the single level horizontal extent of deck required for the containerport-freight operations by developing either more than one level of deck (the second and succeeding levels costing less than the first level) or providing vertical storage facilities. It must also be borne in mind that from a tax viewpoint the deck is a depreciable asset as opposed to an investment in land purchase.

The site under study, for example, might be developed with a conventional single level — containerport, or a facility for LASH and roll-on — roll-off on the first level, with storage, manufacturing and production uses stacked above providing direct movement of goods from ship, truck, and rail into the manufacturing facilities. This would help split the land development costs between the containerport — freight terminal uses, on the first level, and the manufacturing facilities and storage facilities above.

One example of such development might be an expansion of the adjacent meat market onto a portion of the present pier areas. The first levels of such an operation would provide for rail, truck, and container movements. Meat could be shipped to the site by water or rail and unloaded directly from the ships or cars into the storage and processing facilities. Processed meats would then be distributed by truck to outlets in the City, by rail to New England, and perhaps by ship to other parts of the United States or overseas.

Such a facility might become a more general food and beverage importation, processing, and distribution center. Much of the market for such goods is directly in Manhattan. The goods are bound for the City anyway, and the jobs involved in processing and shipment might just as well be New York City jobs.

Access to upper level uses will be necessary by truck. There exist a number of ways of providing such access, including direct ramps (which are possible on this site because of the lengths of building involved), individual tenant freight elevators, or truck elevators.



2 north/south section looking east (no scale)

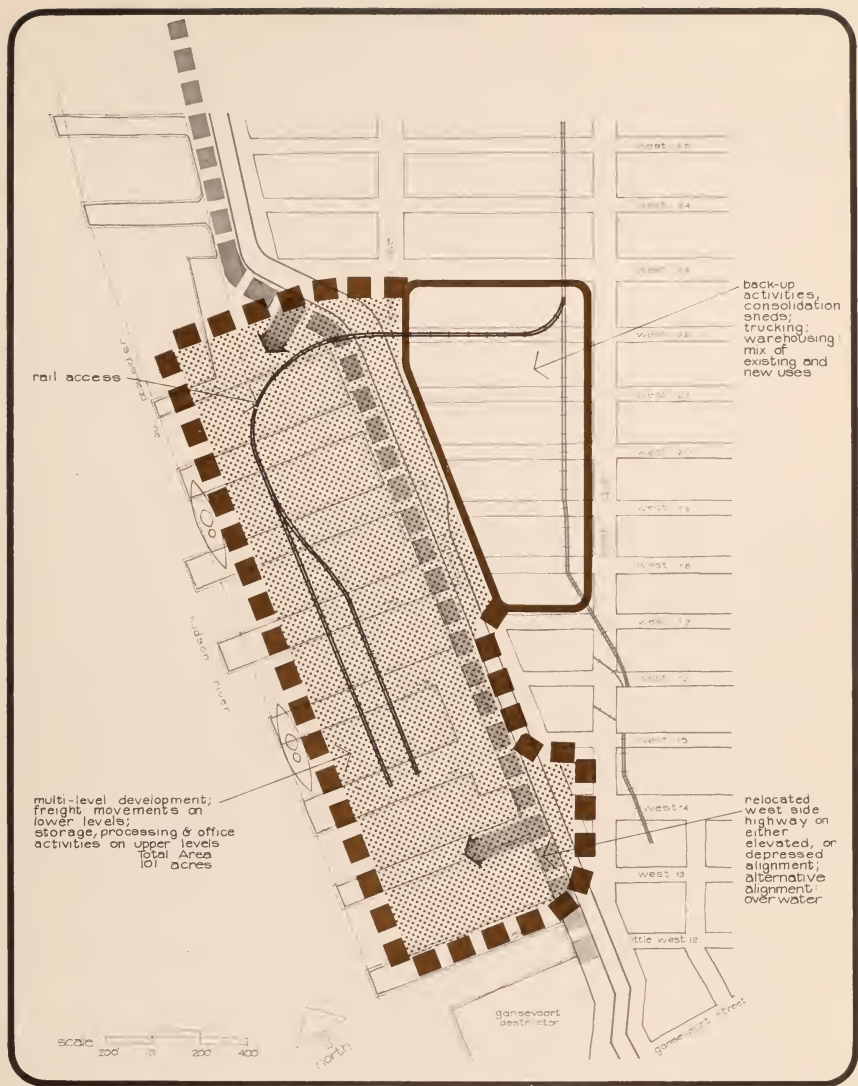
Of course, there are many other types of New York City manufacturing and distribution activities besides the meat market which depend on imported materials and/or export their products, and which would, consequently, be entirely appropriate on this site.

(c) Subsidies

32. Even with stacking of uses, some form of subsidy is almost certainly essential. In analyzing these subsidies it must be remembered that even the outlying containerports receive huge public subsidies (which are seldom properly attributed) in the form of publicly constructed and maintained highways and utilities, bridges and tunnels providing access to the sites, as well as publicly maintained shipping channels. Other, even more hidden "costs" involve the steady erosion of jobs and businesses from our central cities which the development of such suburban facilities foster.
33. Possible forms of subsidy might include:
 - (a) **Urban renewal** to assist in land acquisition, demolition and site preparation. Such procedures have been utilized in the past to reduce costs for Port Authority containerport developments in Brooklyn, where acquisition and demolition costs of between \$11 and

In concept 3 the long term development potential of the site is indicated. Consolidation activities serving the intermodal freight terminal are moved inland to the blocks between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues. There, existing major warehouse or distribution centers could be integrated with new intensive back up and service activities, including stuffing and stripping areas for containers, plus truck service operations.

The waterfront is developed with multi-level uses. The first levels are devoted to goods movement and storage, with shipping operations in quay-type berths and provision for transshipment to railroad cars, trucks, and elevators serving upper level storage, distribution, office, and processing plants.



3

long term full
integration of
water and
back-up areas

\$12 million for back-up land to support Piers 9, 10 and 9C were reduced to \$1 million (more than a tenfold reduction) through use of public urban renewal funds.

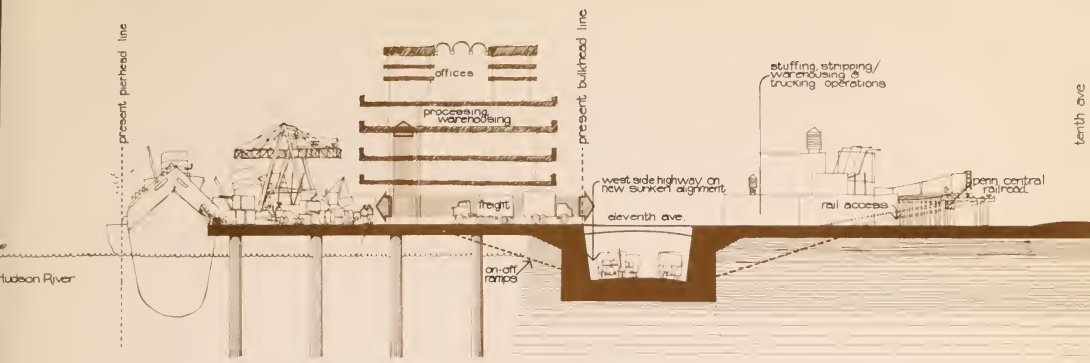
- (b) **Use of City financing**, which, because of favorable tax treatment, can secure funds at lower interest cost than private developers.
- (c) **Use of tax abatement** which can at least partially compensate for high land and development costs through reducing rentals to tenants. The intensive nature of the development under study would, even with such tax abatement, almost certainly result in higher tax yields to the City than are now received from the property. At the same time, there would be an increase in the City's economic health and job picture resulting from the new developments on the waterfront.

We would estimate that the 50 to 70 acre area which is redeveloped from the pierhead line to the east side of Eleventh Avenue will support at least 500 jobs in goods movement and handling. In addition, the stacked uses above the intermodal freight distribution center could provide at least 2,000,000 square feet of distribution and processing space, with employment for 4,000 to 5,000 workers. Other jobs would be created in trucking and the various servicing operations required for such a center as well as in potential firms attracted or retained in Manhattan by the availability of rapid and efficient cargo handling. Thus, the potential contribution to New York City's economy is great, and tax abatement would appear to be a highly appropriate financial lever.

- (d) **Utilization of other funding sources to help pay for the required decking.** One possible cost sharing approach would be to place the new West Side Highway in an overwater location. In this way, the highway could pay for the piers and basic deck section along the roadway location, with the highway piers engineered to absorb additional loadings required for the containerport-stacked uses above. In this way a portion of the required piling at least 100' to 150' wide could be charged against the highway instead of the freight distribution center.

M. Staging of Development

- 34. Implementation of the program outlined in this conceptual study for an intermodal — freight distribution center in



3 east/west section

west side highway on new sunken alignment (proposed)

Chelsea plus stacked industrial and warehousing uses above will require agreements and approvals among many different levels of government. Full-fledged implementation of the program is obviously several years away, since it depends on reconstruction of the West Side Highway as a key element in the staging and development of the site.

35. Nonetheless, the program is capable of implementation in stages, and certain activities can be started at once.

The most obvious possibility for first stage activity involves use of Piers 59, 60, 61, and 62 for some form of intermodal freight transfer. New York City's Economic Development Administration has already made a proposal to use the 700,000 square feet of space in these piers as a centralized international inbound air cargo clearance facility.

Air cargo at New York's three major airports has been growing at the rate of 20 percent per year. At the same time, passenger traffic has also increased substantially, resulting in a serious squeeze on the space available for cargo handling at the airports. Further, that freight which requires customs clearance at J.F. Kennedy Airport is dispersed at many different cargo facilities scattered around the airport. Thus the creation of a centralized air cargo clearance facility would offer several advantages:

- (a) It would reduce congestion at the airports.
- (b) It would eliminate the need for large investments in new space at the airports.
- (c) Because of the economics of scale, it would be possible to achieve a lower overall cost of handling and clearing international inbound air cargo.

Plans called for the shipment of cargo from the airport to the piers in large trucks. At the piers, cargo would be cleared, sorted, and placed in smaller trucks for distribution throughout the metropolitan area. A possible future alternative or supplementary method of handling might involve direct barging of the goods from the airport to the piers, with a consequent reduction in overall trucking. Such a distribution system, however, must await development of faster barging techniques than are presently available.

The air cargo clearance center would make excellent use of the present piers. Then, once West Side Highway plans are drawn up, the remainder of the staged development outlined in this conceptual plan could be implemented, beginning perhaps south of Piers 59-62, where there is now no economic activity to be displaced.

Other early stage activities should involve an in-depth exploration of LASH facilities at finger-type piers in Chelsea. It is also possible that with the reactivation of the piers, some break bulk cargo (which has not, by any means, disappeared from the port) could be brought back to Chelsea.

The potential of the Chelsea piers is very great. The availability of water, road and rail access, the lack of any displacement, and the area's proximity to major markets make the site ideal for the creation of many jobs and provision of a strong stimulus to the City's overall economy.

